The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1879 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 1947 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 37, NO. 15

Write Your Senators And Congressman To Fight Anti-Labor Bills

70 AFL Teachers' Locals Chartered Since Start of Present School Year

New Haven, Conn.—Seventy new locals have been chartered by the American Federation of Teachers (AFL) since the start of the current school year—30 of them since January 1, the largest number chartered in any comparable period in the history of the AFT.

This disclosure highlighted an address by Irvin R. Kuenzli, AFT national secretary, before the newly formed Connecticut State Federation of Teachers at the Yale Divinity School Auditorium.

The campaign of the National Education Association to check the rapid progress of the AFT, Mr. Kuenzli declared, "rather than hindering its expansion, is serving as a boomerang and accelerating the organization of teachers.

"On March 22," Mr. Kuenzli said, "Willard Givens, national executive secretary of the NEA, gave an address to a group of teachers in Cleveland, Ohio, in which he emphatically condemned the organization of teachers in unions affiliated with organized labor. During the week following Mr. Givens' address five new locals of the AFT were organized.

"Since the NEA is controlled largely by superintendents of schools, most of whom occupy political jobs and many of whom have been imported by certain organized groups for the purpose of keeping teachers' salaries down, it is not surprising that officials of the organization should feel that teachers should not organize in groups which would give them real power and the advantages of collective bargaining.

"Herein lies the basis of the never-ending school crises which have culminated in the present critical situation in the schools. In a profession in which the employer—who hires and fires the teachers—controls the employes' organization, it is not surprising that salaries and working conditions have been at such a low professional level that teachers are leaving the profession in a mass exodus.

"In 1943, Mr. Givens, addressing the annual convention of the NEA, described the weakness of the NEA as follows:

"'The Association's chief weakness is in the field of teacher welfare and in mustering legislative pressure where rapid and integrated action is demanded . . . Is it possible that teachers' associations as now organized, with small dues and limited welfare programs, can compete indefinitely with the organized groups that have expansive and powerful purposes?'

"This failure of nonunion groups to provide for the professional welfare of teachers and to muster legislative action when needed is a basic cause of the present school crisis. Our answer is a clear-cut 'No' to Mr. Givens' query as to whether teachers' associations as now organized can compete indefinitely with the organized groups that have powerful and expansive purposes. In this question, asked by Mr. Givens three years ago, lies the cause of the present crisis in the schools.

"Teachers are beginning to realize this fact and are disregarding the advice of the NEA officials to stay out of the AFT. The AFT now has locals in all but one of the 25 largest cities of the Nation. There are also AFT locals in nearly three-fourths of the cities of the Nation over 100,000 population and in hundreds of cities and towns under 100,000. Some of these locals are still new and relatively small but a large percentage of them are strong organizations representing a majority of the teachers in the school system."

Mr. Kuenzli outlined the recommendations of the AFL in the field of education and stated that there would be no crisis in the schools today if the teachers had been organized with sufficient strength to carry out these recommendations.

"Inadequate education is very costly in the long run," he added, "since crime and delinquency are costing several times the total costs of education and most of the arrests are in the field of school age children."

Green Pays High Tribute To Public Health Nurses

Washington, D. C.—President William Green extended the warm felicitations of the American Federation of Labor to the public health nurses of America in the observance of Public Health Nursing Week, set for the week beginning April 20.

In a formal statement, Mr. Green said:

"The week of April 20-26, 1947, will be observed throughout the Nation as Public Health Nursing Week. At this time, tribute will be paid to the public health nurses of America—women who are conscientiously performing a vital role in curing the sick as well as preventing disease. The observance of the week is being sponsored by the National Organization for Public Health Nursing with the cooperation of other groups including the United States Public Health Service.

"More than 20,000 public health nurses are employed in the United States and territories by local, State and national agencies. They work for health departments, boards of education, and other official agencies, and for nonofficial organizations such as visiting nurse associations, tuberculosis associations, insurance companies, and industries.

"But 20,000 nurses are not nearly sufficient to take care of the needs of all the people. That is why the aims of the observance include encouraging more nurses to enter the field of public health nursing, interesting more high school and college girls in choosing public health nursing as a career, and stimulating the development of organized health services in all areas of the United States.

"Public health services of this kind are of utmost value to the American worker. The excellent care given the sick is no less important than the hygiene and health habits taught by the nurses at home, in the school and in the factory, for the long-range goal of the public health nurses is a healthy America.

"As President of the American Federation of Labor, I wish success to the National Organization for Public Health Nursing in their worthy efforts to broaden and improve the services of the Public Health Nurses to the people of our Nation."

Sharp Conflict Marks Radio Debate On House Proposals to Chain Labor

Washington, D. C.—Sharp conflict over the possible merits and dangers of the newly drafted House anti-labor bill marked the latest nation-wide discussion by business, labor, farm and legislative spokesmen on the "America United" program, broadcast over the facilities of the National Broadcasting System.

A minority member of the House Labor Committee, which drafted the punitive, omnibus measure, Rep. Lesinski, of Michigan, declared:

"It is quite fair and accurate to say that this bill has been designed to permit crippling, if not total destruction, of the labor movement, and at the same time to guarantee that if the labor movement survives at all it is to survive solely as a labor front, controlled, operated and regulated by the Government in the interest of employers."

In this position Mr. Lesinski was supported by Boris Shishkin, American Federation of Labor economist, who charged that the proposed legislation would outlaw most unions and place the others completely under Federal control.

"This bill," Mr. Shishkin declared, "goes far beyond any known precedent in any field in peacetime Federal intervention. It extends Federal control into the very heart of collective bargaining. It allows Federal authority to cut across the binding fibre of private contracts. It thrusts Federal jurisdiction into the area now reserved to State and local jurisdiction. It writes a detailed script for collective bargaining negotiations, every step of which must represent Government ukase, and if anybody departs from those steps, he is in violation of the law and he is outlawed. It regiments the active workers and employers. It subjects organizations to all-embracing Government control."

Granting that the rights of the public should predominate in consideration of any legislation, Mr. Shishkin observed:

"And yet today the public is subjected to the worst fleecing we have ever known because of the runaway prices. All of the labor disputes during the last year and a half have been due to that squeeze to which we are subjected, now worse than at any time before. We have a situation in which we must deal with the causes of our present difficulties. The Government is derelict in failing to deal with them, and Congress is not moving a finger to protect the general public."

Milton Smith, assistant counsel of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, and Fred Bailey, of the National Grange, took issue with the positions of Rep. Lesinski and Mr. Shishkin. Mr. Smith said the pending legislation seems on some points to be directly in line with the Chamber' position but on other points does not deal as effectively as that group would desire with regard to certain problems. Mr. Bailey said his farm group believed labor legislation passed in the last ten or twelve years was lopsided and that the farmers believed the time had come to strike a balance.

Declaring that the House bill deprives labor of gains won over a long period of years of struggle, Rep. Lesinski asserted his belief that workers "should be permitted the right to raise living standards and to see that everybody is paid a living wage." Such efforts, he said, would be gravely jeopardized, if not wiped out, by the pending legislation. He added:

"Business has a right to organize and labor should have the same right, the same protections. This bill in its entirety gives no protection to any type of labor. It would drive labor leaders under ground and would be a real bid for communistic views," he added.

AFL URGES SENATE TO RESTORE FUNDS TO DEPT. OF LABOR

Washington, D. C.—Sharp protest against a trend in Congress to "short-change" labor by slashing appropriations financing services invaluable to American workers was registered by AFL President William Green before the Senate Appropriations Committee considering the budget of the Labor Department.

Reviewing the history of the Labor Department, established in the Cabinet after a long campaign by the AFL, Mr. Green pointed out the necessity, recognized many years ago, of maintaining an efficient Federal labor statistics bureau to determine the progress of American workers. Attacking the proposed cut of 43 percent below the Bureau of Labor Statistics budget estimate as "unwise and wasteful," Mr. Green told the committee:

"The Bureau of Labor Statistics is providing the Nation with more than half of the over-all economic statistics outside the field of finance and agriculture necessary to the President's Council of Economic Advisors, to sound legislative planning, to business analysts, labor arbitrators, and labor and management in negotiations. When you are figuring in terms of the budget of more than $30,000,000,000, a saving of $3,000,000 is pitifully small and in terms of value received is uneconomical."

Mr. Green, commenting upon a $14,000,000 slash in the Labor Department appropriation bill, ironically called the attention of Congress to its plans for spending more "for the protection of migratory birds and other wild life" than to "protect workers' minimum wage standards."

The labor leader said some $6,000,000 was proposed to aid wildlife in the fiscal year ending July 1, while the House "has appropriated only $4,057,000 to protect workers' minimum wage standards."

Mr. Green did not ask for restoration of any specific amounts, but urged "adequate" funds because, he said, the "department's function is to promote the welfare of more than 40,000,000 wage earners and salaried workers."

Terming the maintenance of high production important at this time, Mr. Green added:

"It is not economy to paralyze the services that can assist management and labor to effect wise adjustments."

He said funds for the Labor Department "are pitifully small" when compared with the millions of dollars Congress provides for 6,000,000 farmers through the Agriculture Department funds.

"It amounts in all to much more than $100 per farmer per year," Mr. Green said, compared with a proposed outlay under House terms of "less than $2.25 per worker."

"The American Federation of Labor favors economy in government," Mr. Green said, "but we believe the cut of 43 percent below the Bureau of Labor Statistics budget estimate is unwise and wasteful."

Among other points, Mr. Green contended that:

Wage-and-hour inspections would permit "only 6 percent coverage" under the House reduction.

The slash in funds for the Federal Conciliation Service would prevent attempts to settle labor-management disputes "before strikes and lockouts occur."

The National Labor Relations Board may have 16,500 to 17,000 labor disputes to handle in the 12 months beginning July 1, instead of the 10,500 cases estimated by the board itself.

AUSTRIAN LABOR GIVEN VOICE IN RUNNING PLANTS

Vienna.—Parliament passed the Works Council Law. Under this measure, which was long and bitterly debated, the elected representatives of workers will be permitted to demand consultation in matters not only of labor relations but also of marketing, financing and other policies of management.

Spokesmen of Austria's leading political groups, the People's party and the Socialists, hailed the new right of workers to be fully informed of management's plans and to a review of management's policies by the State Economic Commission as the key to the coming period of experimentation with industrial democracy.

In plants where more than 500 are employed, the workers' council may by a two-thirds vote protest management policy to the National Economic Commission through the National Confederation of Labor. The protest can be on the ground that the economic future of the workers' plant is endangered or that management's policy is contrary to the interests of Austrian economy.

If a shutdown is threatened, such an appeal automatically postpones the closing until the commission takes action.

SAN FRANCISCO AIR GROUP WINS PAY BOOST FIGHT

San Francisco, Calif.—The two independent radio stations of this city, KYA and KSFO, are back on the air after a three-day strike by the American Federation of Radio Artists (AFL). A compromise settlement was won providing an 18-month contract, retroactive to last January 1 and guaranteeing no discrimination against strikers.

The new agreement provides wage scales for announcers ranging from $67.50 to $77.50 a week, with a further $2.50 weekly raise on October 1. Former salaries were from $55 to $60.

AFL COUNCIL TO WEIGH PUNITIVE LABOR BILLS AT SESSION MONDAY

Washington, D. C.—The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor will convene here Monday, April 21, to consider some of the gravest problems posed before the union movement in many years.

Foremost among the matters confronting the Council are the omnibus anti-labor bills drafted by House and Senate Labor Committees, which would put the entire union movement under Government restrictions and threaten destrubtion of high standards won by organized labor.

Among other matters on the Council's agenda is the challenge presented to American workers by the climbing costs of living, the necessity of wage raises to meet these increases and recommendations for development of a leveling-off program to slash prices and avert inflation.

Cleveland Council Attacks Coercive Anti-Labor Bills

Cleveland.—Claims made by anti-labor lawmakers that they have a "mandate" from the "grass roots" to enact legislation curbing workers' rights were riddled in an unusual "emergency resolution" adopted by the Cleveland City Council.

Passed by a landslide 26-to-1 majority, the resolution memorialized both Congress and the Ohio state legislature not to rush through any measures "which will make for industrial strife," but instead to "give careful and deliberate consideration of any measures seeking to restrict or deny any of the inalienable rights of the workingman."

The resolution stressed that "the progress and prosperity of the nation and this state depend upon the preservation of free enterprise, which necessarily includes a system of free labor."

It also pointed out that "organized labor is one of the moving forces which have made America great, helped win two great world wars, and achieved for America the highest standard of living in the entire world."

Finally, the council insisted that real industrial peace can only be achieved by "good labor-management relations rather than by a coercive legislative process."

Important Gains Reported By AFL In Toronto Drive

Washington, D. C.—Important gains in the organizing campaign of the American Federation of Labor in Toronto, Canada, were detailed in a report by Max Federman, chairman of the campaign there, to AFL President William Green.

The report showed that jewelry workers employed by Coro Ltd., one of the largest such plants in the British Empire, voted three to one to recognize the Metal Polishers International (AFL) as their bargaining agent, the union also selected by workers in the Bond & Boyd plant. Similar successes were reported in other industries.

Acknowledging the report, Mr. Green said:

"I congratulate you and your associates most highly upon the success which has met your organizing activities among the costume jewelry workers, the cork and insulation plant, cleaners and dyers and in other fields. Please accept my thanks for this excellent service which you have rendered, not only to the workers of your locality but to the American Federation of Labor as well."

GREEN CALLS ON LABOR TO GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO 'I'M AMERICAN DAY'

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green, in a letter to all State Federations of Labor and City Central Bodies, urged wholehearted support of the observance of "I Am An American Day" on Sunday, May 18, and coupled this with the request for a nation-wide observance of "National Citizenship Week" which will begin May 11.

In his message to affiliates of the American Federation of Labor Mr. Green said:

"Because of the attack which is being made upon our freedom and liberty and constitutional rights, through the introduction of anti-labor legislation, it seems most fitting and appropriate that we enter into the observance of 'I Am An American Day' and 'Citizenship Week' in spirit and in purpose.

"I therefore call upon the membership of the American Federation of Labor, through city central labor unions and State Federations of Labor, to participate in the observance of these occasions in full measure. Join with civic groups and patriotic organizations in an impressive observance of these events."

Green, In Final Plea to House, Asks Defeat of Anti-Labor Bill

Floor Debate Begins; Senate Measure Hit By Wagner, Aiken

Washington, D. C.—In a final plea on behalf of America's toiling millions, AFL President William Green addressed letters to every member of the House urging rejection of the omnibus anti-labor bill which would wipe out the gains won by workers over long years of heart-rending struggle for a decent standard of living.

Striking sharply at labor's foes who are sponsoring such legislation, Mr. Green declared in his letter:

"These millions of workers who will be the victims of this restrictive and oppressive legislation are the same workers who served so patriotically during the recent war, and who produced the airplanes, ships, tanks and guns and who serviced the transportation systems of the Nation to win the war. Is this to be their reward? Are they to be punished, oppressed, and their rights and liberties restricted by vindictive, punitive laws?

"Why this drive to weaken and exploit labor? The men and women of labor here in America who cherish the blessings of freedom and liberty cannot accept or become reconciled to such drastic legislation. No nation under the sun has proposed or considered the adoption of such legislation as this since the close of the war.

"This earnest and sincere personal appeal is based upon my knowledge and understanding of the heart and mind of the working people of the Nation. In their name I earnestly appeal to you to vote against this bill."

The appeal from Mr. Green reached each member of the House as the over-all bill to paralyze the union movement arrived on the floor for debate:

The measure would ban the closed shop, industry-wide bargaining, jurisdictional strikes, secondary boycotts and mass picketing. It would make unions liable to law suits and authorize use of injunctions in strikes which were held to threaten national health, safety or welfare. It would go far beyond these limits and its effect, labor leaders agreed, would be to render the union movement impotent and block any effort to obtain wage increases for workers to meet sky-rocketing costs of living.

As the House opened debate on the measure, members of the Senate Labor Committee, drafting a somewhat similar but less drastic bill, was rejecting some of the more punitive proposals sponsored by labor's foes.

The Senate group voted 8 to 5 against a suggestion by Senator Taft of Ohio to allow individual employers to bring law suits and obtain injunctions against jurisdictional strikes, secondary boycotts, strikes in violation of contracts and strikes for recognition. The committee agreed to make these items "unfair labor practices" to be handled by the National Labor Relations Board.

The Senate group also voted 7 to 6 to strike out a section restricting union welfare funds and dues check-offs.

Sections approved by the Senate Committee would:

1. Create an independent Federal mediation service and a Federal mediation director. The latter would be aided by an advisory panel composed of six labor and six management members.
2. Allow suits by and against labor organizations.
3. Force unions to register and file financial statements.
4. Create a 14-member Senate-House "committee on labor-management labor relations" to study basic problems. The committee eliminated a provision to establish a council of paid committee advisers.

Meanwhile, Senator Taft's plan to throw all anti-labor legislation into a general bill was sharply attacked by spokesmen of both parties.

Senator Aiken, Republican, of Vermont, declared he believed Taft's plan to keep all labor legislation in a single all-or-nothing bill was an attempt "to put President Truman on the spot."

"I haven't seen such high-handed political bossism since I've been in Congress," he added.

Senator Wagner, Democrat, of New York, bitterly assailed the current move to wreck trade unionism and deprive workers of the gains for which they fought for generations, declared:

"This bill constitutes a grand assault on our industrial democracy. It is an attack further to undermine the forces which could help to raise the purchasing power of the people at the very time when business itself is becoming alarmed by the inordinate profits it is reaping.

"If the leadership in Congress wants to assist the Communist Party in the promotion of widespread class warfare, industrial chaos, and economic depression in this country, they could not devise a better method of doing so than recommending the enactment of such legislation.

"All who are interested in the basic human rights of the ordinary citizen should diligently and vigorously resist such legislation."

Text of Green Letter

Washington, D. C.—The full text of the letter addressed by AFL President William Green to every member of the House, appealing for defeat of the omnibus anti-labor bill, follows:

I am making this last appeal to you, in behalf of the millions of members of the American Federation of Labor, to vote against the highly objectionable anti-labor measure recommended for passage by the House Committee on Education and Labor.

Please bear in mind that these millions of workers who will be the victims of this restrictive and oppressive legislation are the same workers who served so patriotically during the recent World War and who produced the airplanes, the ships, the tanks, the guns, and served on the transportation systems of the nation in such a wonderful way in order to win the war. Is this to be their reward? Are they to be punished, oppressed, and their rights and liberties restricted by vindictive, punitive laws?

Please consider this phase of the question for a moment. I cannot help but think if you will do so you will vote against H.R. 3020 as I have herein requested. What is back of it all? Why this drive to weaken labor and subject it to exploitation?

The men and women of labor here in America who cherish the blessings of freedom and liberty as a common heritage, can not accept or become reconciled to such drastic legislation. No nation under the sun has proposed or considered the adoption of such legislation as this since the close of the war.

This earnest and sincere personal appeal is based upon my knowledge and understanding of the heart and mind of the working people of the nation. In their name and for them I earnestly appeal to you to vote against this measure.

Anti-Labor Bill Points at Labor's Heart, Minority Report to House Declares

Washington, D. C.—The House omnibus anti-labor bill is designed deliberately to wreck the living standards of the American people, would wipe out labor gains recorded over a long period of years, and would turn back the clock at least a century and a half in the labor field.

These are the highlights of the minority report of the House Labor Committee on the over-all labor legislation, which House sponsors predicted would be passed in that branch of Congress within a week.

Taking sharp issue with the majority, which rushed the bill through the committee, the minority group declared:

"This bill is aimed at the heart of American industrial democracy. If it is permitted to hit that target, the working people of this country will not soon recover their status as free men. The Fascists and Communists learned early that a strong trade union movement was inconsistent with their objectives and an obstacle to the achievement of those objectives. As a means of securing power, the Fascists and the Communists destroyed the labor movement in other countries, because they recognized that trade unions were a citadel of democracy which they must batter down in order to achieve their evil purposes.

"Surely the Congress of the United States ought not to be blind to this lesson of recent history. Surely it can find better things to do in this year, when the powers of world reconstruction are in danger of being outrun by the dark forces of chaos, than to throw its energies into a program that can only serve to weaken the weak and strengthen the strong.

"We at least will have no part in pressing down this crown of thorns upon the brow of labor. We call upon our colleagues of both parties to join us in this battle against restrictive, undemocratic, and unnecessary legislation."

Blasting the tactics of the majority in rushing the bill through the committee without permitting time for adequate study, the minority declared that it did not "consider this a committee bill." Protesting vigorously that no general meetings of the committee were held for discussion of the measure, despite its far-reaching effects upon "our industrial and labor policies, upon the development of relations between the Federal Government and the States, on important functionings of Government departments and the well-being of our people, the minority declared that the bill, "under the guise of punishing a few labor leaders, strikes down many legitimate rights of the rank and file of labor."

The minority report added:

"It does not, require mature reflection to realize that these proposals are deliberately designed to wreck the living standards of the American people. Under the false guise of 'correcting labor abuses' this bill is designed to so weaken, as in effect to repeal, the National Labor Relations Act. By making practically all strikes unlawful it repeals the Norris-La Guardia Act, signed by President Hoover. By removing the protection of the Clayton Act from practically all trade union activity, it makes trade unions and their members subject to suits for treble damages under the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890.

"It revives the common law doctrine of conspiracy against workers who band together to protect their living standards and thereby throws the law back to where it was in England in the late 1700s. This bill does not merely wipe out labor's gains under the beneficent administration of President Roosevelt; it turns the clock of history back at least a century and a half and eliminates safeguards and protections which both Republicans and Democratic Congresses have sponsored for generations.

"It undertakes to do this at a time when rising price levels have begun to squeeze the American worker dry. It does not propose, as the answer to our economic problems, the hope of a rising standard of living made possible by our enormously increased productivity.

"It does not propose to treat with fairness those millions of American workers who contributed so signally to our victory in war and our reconversion to peace. It only proposes to swell the coffers of gigantic industrial combinations by rendering labor impotent.

"By placing heavy penalties upon industry-wide bargaining this bill forces workers to compete with each other to see which can work for the lowest wages. It forces the fair-minded employer to cut his wages to the level of his worst sweat-shop competitor. It strikes from the hand of labor its most effective weapon—the right to strike. It discourages collective bargaining by encouraging individual bargaining, though our experience from 1920 to 1929 proved that individual bargaining can only result in reduction of wages and consequent depression.

"It revives company unionism as a method by which the employer may sit on both sides of the bargaining table. It lumps together for punitive action the criminal or slothful employe and the honest and conscientious worker; it deprives the patriotic citizen of long-established rights in order to punish the misguided.

"The bill is not designed to help employers but to punish labor. It strikes at the established Federal policy of encouraging collective bargaining, to make of the Federal Government a mere police court, taking over functions which have, with few exceptions, been well handled by States and local communities.

"While preaching economy, the majority would enormously increase the size of the Federal establishment devoted to the handling of labor problems. While denouncing bureaucracy, the majority would set up two new independent agencies within the executive branch of the Government. While they decry Federal intervention in local affairs, the majority would transfer from State and local authority to the Federal Government, or would duplicate within the Federal Government, matters traditionally left to State action.

"While purporting to defend free enterprise and free collective bargaining, the majority would throw about employers, employes, and trade unions shackles not heretofore proposed in any legislative assembly in the country.

"While pretending to seek industrial peace, the majority have included in their bill proposals which would unsettle labor relations, make illegal countless heretofore accepted industrial practices, destroy many well-recognized legal rights, and bring to labor relations a confusion and chaos which must result in bitter and costly strikes.

"We cannot believe that such a program can commend itself to men conscious of their responsibilities."

The minority report analyzed the bill section by section, condemned the decision to deal with the entire labor program in a single measure and deplored the postponement of legislation to improve workers' security. It was signed by Reps. Lesinski of Michigan, Kelly of Pennsylvania, Powell and Klein of New York, Madden of Indiana, and Kennedy of Massachusetts.

DELAWARE BANS CLOSED SHOP

Dover, Del.—Delaware's legislature has passed a bill which prohibits the closed shop, bans mass picketing and outlaws jurisdictional strikes in the state. The bill was signed by Gov. Walter W. Bacon within minutes after it was approved in both houses.

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

SUPPLEMENT

Write Your Senators And Congressman To Fight Anti-Labor Bills

WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1947 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

Anti-Labor Bill Blasted By Meany On Eve of Showdown Vote In House

Washington, D. C.—The position of America's workers as champions of freedom against encroachment by Communism and profit-greedy corporations, is seriously threatened by the Hartley anti-labor bill.

This was the blunt declaration of George Meany, Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, in a coast-to-coast radio address carrying labor's vital legislative message to the American people.

In a blistering assault upon House proposals to shackle American workers, carried over the Mutual Broadcasting System, Mr. Meany pulled no punches when he declared emphatically that House Labor Chairman Hartley of New Jersey, in drafting this anti-labor bill, was merely taking the dictation of the National Association of Manufacturers.

"Throughout the 68 pages of the Hartley bill," Mr. Meany declared, "we find the ideas and the very language of the NAM's anti-labor program lifted bodily and incorporated into the bill. * * * The bill should be known as the National Association of Manufacturers' bill, which in fact it is."

The AFL official lashed at the NAM for not caring about anything except "profits, more profits and still more profits," carrying this greed to the point where no concern is shown over the fact that the official anti-Communist program of the United States would be "torpedoed."

Mr. Meany warned that the Hartley NAM bill, if enacted, would weaken the American economy to the point where this nation would be unable to "command respect in its dealings with the other nations of the world."

"American workers will not cheerfully accept any statute which compels them to work against their will," Mr. Meany emphasized. "They will resent and resist such a flagrant violation by Congress of the Constitution of the United States—in particular, the Thirteenth Amendment, which forbids involuntary servitude.

"This bill will bring more recruits into the ranks of those opposed to the American way of life than the Communist Party of the United States has been able to enroll in 30 years. Communism thrives on chaos, disorder and oppression, and this bill—sponsored and written by attorneys for greedy anti-labor employers—will surely bring about internal chaos, disorder and oppression."

The oft-repeated claim that Congress has a "mandate" to "clamp handcuffs and a straitjacket on the American wage-earner" was ridiculed by Mr. Meany.

"There is not a particle of truth to any such claim," he declared. "The fact is that last year's election mandate was to eliminate bureaucracy, to wipe out regimentation. It was a protest against the very bureaucracy and regimentation that this legislation would bring about."

The AFL official took cognizance of Republican attacks on regimentation during the years when the G. O. P. was out of power and commented:

"It seems strange to see leaders of a party which has been assailing regimentation for 14 long years now advocating regimentation for the 40,000,000 wage-earners of the nation."

Mr. Meany closed his address with references to what he termed the aspect of the Hartley-NAM bill, which is "perhaps more disturbing than any other"—the "political" aspect.

"The American wage-earner has been told over and over again, down through the years," Mr. Meany recalled, "that the Republican Party was the party of privilege, of profit—the party of Wall Street and the big corporations.

"The American worker has hesitated to believe these charges because he was convinced that this was the one country in the world where the class struggle could not be a national political issue. But when we scrutinize the origin of this vicious anti-labor proposal, when we hear the paid spokesmen for Big Business strongly urging its passage on the air, when we see the large corporations using the power that comes with a swollen treasury proposing its restrictions through full-page advertisements in our daily press—when we see and hear all these things and then, in addition, hear the official spokesmen for the Republican membership in the House of Representatives not only endorsing this bill but boasting of their ability to enact it into law, **we wonder if the class struggle is about to shift from the economic to the political field.**"

Emphasizing that the AFL has been strictly non-partisan, Mr. Meany said:

"In the face of the political aspects of this proposal to destroy trade unionism, **the question arises as to whether or not we will be compelled by force of circumstances to revise our basic position in order to protect the future of the wage-earners of our country, who in themselves constitute the vast national wealth of which Americans so often boast.**"

Green Supports Seafarers' Protest Against Sale of U. S. Ships Abroad

Washington, D. C.—The Maritime Trades Department of the AFL has been given assurance by President William Green that the AFL will solidly support its protest against sale of more American commercial vessels to countries which hitherto have shown no record of export or import.

In a message to John R. Owens, executive secretary of the AFL Maritime Trades Department, Mr. Green said:

"I deeply appreciate the importance of the question raised in your message regarding the transfer of many American-built ships to foreign flags. Because of the sacrifice of interests in the transfer of American ships to Panama and other countries it becomes our duty to do everything we can to prevent the shift of these vessels. We will join with representatives of the Seafarers' and Longshoremens' organizations in appealing to Congress to deal with this complaint in a practical, constructive and satisfactory way."

The resolution passed at the meeting of the Maritime Trades Department follows:

Whereas, The American Merchant Marine, during World War II, was built up to approximately 50 million tons by American taxpayers, at a cost to them of approximately 20 billion dollars; and

Whereas, The American Merchant Marine today is rapidly decreasing and if nothing is done by the Maritime Commission and Congress to stop this decrease of American ships we will find ourselves with an American Merchant Marine of less tonnage than we had prior to the war; and

Whereas, In 1936 the Merchant Marine Act was passed by Congress, which had for its purpose the building and maintaining of a large and substantial American Merchant Marine to take care of the commerce of this country and to establish national defense; and

Whereas, In the last few months millions of tonnage of American-built ships, built by the American taxpayers' money, has been bought by foreign operators and transferred to foreign flags, including the Panamanian flag, and also American capital has transferred a number of U. S. Government-bought ships to Panamanian registry; and

Whereas, Today the Republic of Panama has a merchant marine tonnage twice as large as it had prior to the war; and

Whereas, The Republic of Panama is not a seafaring nation and does not, by any stretch of the imagination, need this type of tonnage in connection with the export and import trade of their country; and

Whereas, American capital and foreign countries who transferred their ships under the Panamanian flag obviously did this for several reasons: namely, to save taxes, to operate ships with cheaper crews, and to avoid regular steamboat inspection service; and

Whereas, This condition not only weakens the American Merchant Marine and puts thousands of seamen and American shipyard workers and longshoremen out of work, but also weakens the national defense of the United States of America; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Maritime Trades Department, composed of 250,000 American maritime transportation workers affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, hereby go on record demanding that the Maritime Commission, which is charged by Congress under the Merchant Marine Act of 1936 with promoting and safeguarding and building a first-class American Merchant Marine for economic and national defense reasons, immediately take steps to stop the sale of ships to non-maritime nations. And/or to buyers, either American or foreign, who transfer American-built or purchased tonnage, to the Republic of Panama or other non-maritime nations;

And be it further resolved, That we immediately put this problem before Congress through the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries and the Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce and request that they immediately take legislative steps to plug any loopholes in the Ship Sales Act which creates a condition of disposing of American tonnage belonging to the American taxpayers in such manner that it depletes the American Merchant Marine and allows foreign or American speculators to grow fat at the American taxpayers' expense."

OTHER NATIONS PROVE HEALTH

Before the war six countries had lower infant mortality rates than the U. S. Eighteen or more nations had lower death rates among persons aged 35-64.

Food prices jumped 78 percent in the U. S. since 1937.

600,000 TEACHERS QUIT

Six hundred thousand teachers have quit the nation's classrooms in the last seven years for better-paying jobs, the American Federation of Teachers (AFL) estimates.

There were 673 railroad workers killed and 38,313 injured in 1946.

GARMENT WORKERS RAP ANTI-LABOR LEGISLATION

Washington, D. C.—House over-all labor legislation drafted in the last week was severely condemned by the General Executive Board of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (AFL), in session here.

Decrying "the labor-baiting program which Congress now is rushing to completion as a barefaced and undisguised replica of the pattern drafted by the National Association of Manufacturers," the leaders of the garment industry declared:

"These new Congressional labor measures constitute an attempt to wipe out or weaken every social advance secured in our country in the last 14 years."

The resolution adopted by the group added that proposals revealed "the true motives and objectives of the forces which have combined to make a shambles of orderly labor-management relations in America and to move back three generations the living and working standards of the wage earners of our country."

RECESSION FEARED BY SNYDER UNLESS PRICES ARE SLASHED

Washington, D. C.—Response to President Truman's appeal to business to slash prices has been "here and there," with no indication of a general recognition of his request. So far it seems to have evoked individual scattered reaction, but little concerted cooperation.

This was the over-all observation of economic experts who carefully awaited the reaction of business leaders to the President's warning that prices must come down or wages must rise.

Mr. Truman's Council of Economic Advisors, at a recent conference with the President and his Cabinet, warned that the threat of a recession has grown since the first of the year and that immediate adjustment of key prices is imperative to avert a serious economic slump, it was learned.

It was the Council's report, contained in a confidential memorandum to the President and discussed in a special Cabinet meeting, that led Mr. Truman, according to inforced sources, is issue his urgent call for voluntary price cuts by business at his press conference the following day.

The Cabinet agreed in principle with the analysis presented by the Council and showed differences only on points of emphasis, it was reported.

An even gloomier outlook than that of the Council was presented by Marriner S. Eccles, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, who attended the meeting.

The price structure was ailing and misshapen, the meeting was told, and there was no remedy except voluntary action in such key industries as steel, automobiles and building materials, in which prices respond more readily to formal decisions than to supply and demand.

The President was advised also that voluntary price cuts to date had been far from adequate. The leaders in these cuts were, nevertheless, praised for their pioneering.

The President was also informed of the sharply rising rate of profits, which was described in this fashion:

Profits in 1946 were 30 percent greater than in 1945. In the last quarter of 1946 they were 30 percent higher than in the year as a whole. In the first quarter of this year, ending March 31, profits were 30 percent above the rate for the last quarter of 1946.

Profits after taxes in January, February and March of this year were at an annual rate of $15,000,000,000, compared with a 1946 level of $12,000,000,000 and, on a comparable basis, $7,000,000,000 in 1929.

The danger, according to the Council's statement, lay not in the rising rate of profits over the years, since national income had also risen, but in the tendency of profits to outstrip buying power on the incline. As a result of rising prices, purchasing power was dropping but profits mounting, it was said.

It was also asserted that profits were exceeding the point which economists believe to be the rate of accumulation for which there was foreseeable capital expansion.

UMW LOCAL REPORTS GAINS IN NEW DUPONT CONTRACT

Spelter, W. Va.—Double time for the sixth and seventh days worked was provided in a new contract signed last week by District 50, United Mine Workers-AFL and the E. I. duPont de Nemours Co. here.

Employes called in for emergency work will be paid time-and-a-half and will be guaranteed three hours pay whether they work or not. A $1 meal allowance for workers employed 10 hours or more was also specified. Other contract improvements included wage increases ranging from 6 to 12 cents an hour, an 8-cents-an-hour shift differential and dues checkoff.

NEWSPRINT PROFITS CLIMB

There is no shortage of profits for newsprint manufacturers. Net income of Intl. Paper Co. in 1946 was $31,179,048, more than triple its 1945 profits.

AFL Council Fights Legislative Crisis; Pins Final Hopes on Presidential Veto

KRUG CALLS MINERS' LIVING STANDARDS 'SHAME' ON NATION

Washington, D. C.—Deplorable living conditions in American mining towns were assailed vigorously by Interior Secretary J. A. Krug following study of a 340-page report submitted by Rear Admiral Joel T. Boone, Navy Medical Corps, after a searching examination of the coal fields and the conditions of the people there.

Discussing the situation in detail, the report:

Criticized coal operators for the dilapidated, insanitary condition of the dwellings they rent to miners.

Deprecated low standards of public health which tolerate impure drinking water, disease-breeding creeks running through coal camp villages and poor disposal of sewage and garbage.

Cited various deficiencies in prepaid medical services given workers and their families.

Called attention to inadequacies of hospitals in bituminous coal areas.

Utilizing photographs and satistics, as well as first-hand observations of the investigators, to depict substandard conditions of housing, the report recommended:

1. Improvement and modernization "at the earlies practicable time" of company-owned dwellings.
2. Reexamination by labor and management of the rental structure for these houses so that rents may be increased and, in return, tenants have better places in which to live. Company-house rents average $2.50 a month per room, or $10 monthly average for a four-room unit.
3. Extension of opportunities to miners to buy, at reasonable prices, the company-owned houses in which they live.
5. Assistance to miners in the building and financing of privately owned homes, with UMWA also studying the practicability of setting up housing corporations.
6. State legislative reforms to establish minimum housing standards, require builders to obtain permits for new construction and empower county public health departments to enforce compliance with sanitary standards.

'SELFISH INTERESTS' OUT TO 'GET' LABOR RAPPED BY WAGNER

Chicago.—Punitive labor legislation, and the "selfish forces" which sponsor such bills, were soundly condemned by Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York, author of "Labor's Magna Carta"—the National Labor Relations Act—at a ceremony which saw him presented with the fourth annual Pope Leo XIII award of the Sheil School of Social Studies here.

The award, honoring the memory of the Pontiff who wrote the encyclical "The Condition of Labor" and other social pronouncements, was presented by the Most Rev. Bernard J. Sheil, Senior Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago and founder-sponsor of the four-year-old Adult Education School.

The citation reviewed the Senator's career from his investigation of the 1911 Triangle fire to his sponsorship of long-term housing legislation.

It said the Senator was being honored "for his dedication to the cause of working people and for his unselfish devotion to the task of reconstructing the social order in the interest of the common good."

Senator Wagner, who became a Roman Catholic last year, accepted the honor "as a souvenir of my responsibility for the work that remains to be done."

Bishop Sheil declared that "the legal guarantees established by such great legislation as the Wagner Act must be preserved if we are to continue our march toward economic democracy."

Loss of the past 15 years' "progress toward social justice" in "the hysteria of a moment" would be "tragic" he held.

Senator Wagner read excerpts from Pope Leo XIII's writings, and declared that, while many of the social objectives envisaged there had been achieved, "we are still being put to the test."

Shunning "smug contentment," he described as still unsolved problems the extent of social security coverage, protection of the worker from cyclical depressions, "the disastrous consequences to the individual of sudden misfortune necessitating medical care," the unavailability of enough decent housing, racial and religious intolerance and political discrimination.

"At the same time we see many of our social gains threatened," he went on. "Selfish forces have seized upon this time of confusion to increase their power and wealth at the expense of the laborer."

House Votes to Curb Unions, But Senate May Ease Blow

Washington, D. C.—A powerful House coalition, brushing aside warnings that its action would crucify the organized labor movement in the United States, voted 308 to 107 for anti-union legislation to outlaw the closed shop, ban collective bargaining on an industry-wide basis and impose curbs designed to strip unions of gains obtained only after long years of struggle toward an improved living standard.

Efforts of friends of unions to soften the blow at organized labor were unsuccessful when 93 Democrats, mostly from the South, joined 215 Republicans, in the final vote.

Against the bill were 84 Democrats, 22 Republicans and a minor party member.

As the House was acting, the Senate Labor Committee was approving a less drastic measure, but Senate Labor Chairman Taft of Ohio told newsmen he would make an effort on the floor to insert in the bill some of the toughening provisions he had sponsored earner but which were stricken out in committee.

As the House measure, a document of 66 pages, which would rewrite the whole body of labor policy and practice built up in the Roosevelt era, went to the Senate, these were some of its major provisions:

1. Repeal of a substantial part of the Wagner Act; abolition of the National Labor Relations Board and replacing it with a new "labor-management board"; withdrawal of conciliation functions from the Department of Labor in favor of a newly created independent system.
2. Flat prohibition of the closed shop and permission for a continuation of the union shop only where employers themselves have no objection and where a majority of the men involved vote for such a system. Demands for the union shop would not be legitimate subjects on which labor could bargain, and strikes for the union shop would be prohibited.
3. Elimination of industry-wide bargaining, save in a minor way where the employers affected each has less than 100 workers and where their plants are no more than fifty miles apart. This would be done by withdrawing the protection of the labor act from unions seeking to bargain industry-wide. They could thus proceed only without legal status and only when employers wished to bargain in that way.
4. Authorization for the Government to put down by injunctions for a minimum of 75 days strikes deemed to imperil or "threaten to imperil" either the public "health, safety or interest."
5. Permission for private employers to use the injunction against unions, and to sue them for triple damages, for "unlawful concerted activities" such as sympathy, jurisdictional "monopoly," and sit-down strikes, boycotts and the like.
6. Liabilities of unions to penalties of the anti-trust laws.
7. Requirement before any strike for a waiting period of at least 30 days and a majority vote by all employes affected on a ballot which must read: "Shall the employer's last offer of settlement of the current dispute be rejected and a strike called?"
8. Definition of a series of "unfair labor practices" by unions and by individual workers.
9. Provision that membership in the Communist party, or following the party line, shall be ground for summary expulsion from a union.

Hartley, Author of Anti-Labor Bill, Given Dressing-Down by Mrs. Norton

Washington, D. C.—Representative Mary Norton, Democrat of New Jersey, who told her House colleagues she had "no respect" for the man who succeeded her as chairman of the House Labor Committee, said she had no apology for her statement.

"I gave a plain answer to a plain question," she said in a quite emphatic statement.

Mrs. Norton, first woman to be elected to Congress under women's suffrage, made her denunciation of Chairman Hartley, New Jersey Republican, during debate on proposed new labor legislation.

Asked by Representative O'[illegible]e, of New Jersey, why she chose to resign in this session of Congress from the Labor Committee which she had headed for 10 years, Mrs. Norton, with no show of emotion, and looking straight at Mr. Hartley, replied:

"Frankly, in one sense, I regret the question was asked. I never knowingly have hurt any member on either side. * * *

"But I have no respect for the present chairman of the committee. In the 10 years I was chairman of the committee, the gentleman from New Jersey, who comes here and talks as if he knew something about labor, attended exactly six meetings in 10 years.

"That is my reason for leaving the Labor Committee."

Mr. Hartley, his face red, told the House he would not use his own words in reply to remarks that "might more properly have been withheld."

Mrs. Norton was drafted into politics by Mayor Frank Hague of Jersey City, her home town, after she had attracted wide local attention for her work in helping to care for underprivileged children during World War I.

In her first venture into politics in 1923 she was elected a freeholder—supervisor—of Hudson County. She resigned to campaign for Congress and was elected in 1924 and has been successively reelected.

She has a sparkling wit that even a lengthy sickness last year couldn't begin to erase. Almost fully recovered now, Mrs. Norton says, "I only have to be careful."

She describes her 12 successive terms in Congress as a "great experience" and says she fully expects to seek another.

Sometimes, she says, developments on the House floor "make me so angry that I could almost cry."

"But I wouldn't. I'd choke first—and then go home and have a good cry."

Kilgore Hits Senate Drive For Punitive Labor Law

Washington, D. C.—Decrying efforts of labor-baiters in Congress to wipe out gains obtained by American workers over a long period of years, Senator Kilgore of West Virginia lashed out with a warning that these labor foes soon will learn that industrial peace cannot be assured by laws that place labor in an unfair bargaining position.

In a formal statement, Senator Kilgore said:

"Congress' vociferous labor wrecking crew appears determined to wipe out, in one major sweep, many of the rights of labor achieved only after a long, hard struggle.

"This wrecking crew may have the votes to wipe out labor's gains. But, if it does achieve this undemocratic goal, it will awaken one day in the not too distant future to learn that industrial peace cannot be assured by the passage of laws that create new barriers between labor and management, or by laws that place labor in an unfair bargaining position.

"It is an undisputable fact that organized labor has raised the standard of living in our great land. It has not been an easy battle. Oftentimes the working man has been forced to strike to achieve even meager concessions even though in many cases his wages are not high enough to afford a decent standard of living.

"Apparently, the wrecking crew is not interested in these facts. It is operating under the blind, unrealistic theory that industrial peace can be achieved only if organized labor is subservient to industry.

"Short-sighted men in other nations and of this nation in the past also have followed such a course, and their countries lived to regret their actions. In an effort to speed action on their program of punitive labor legislation, these Congressmen are saying that they are saving labor from itself. Nothing could be further from the truth. History proves that blind reaction will bring down the house of industry as well as that of labor. It is regrettable that some members of Congress have not profited by the mistakes of others in this respect."

MINE DEATH TOLL HEAVY

Mine disasters have claimed an average of five victims daily in the 39 years from 1906 to 1945.

HEALTH SERVICES SHORT

Forty percent of U. S. counties have no full-time public health officer to look after preventive health services.

STEEL PROFITS SKYROCKET

Steel profits in the third quarter of 1946 were 322 percent greater than the average for the 1936-39 period.

MOST DISPUTES SETTLED

The U. S. Conciliation Service settled 2,398 out of 2,573 labor disputes in the 11 western states in 1946.

Union Chiefs Gather To Chart Battle On Anti-Labor Measures

Washington, D. C.—Determined to marshal all the forces of organized labor for the defeat of the most drastic anti-union legislation in American history, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor opened a momentous session in the Nation's Capital.

Confronted with the adoption of this legislation by an overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives and the practical certainty of the passage of an almost equally tough bill in the Senate within a few days, the leaders of labor were pinning their hopes on a Presidential veto.

These hopes gained support from public statements by members of Congress and from unofficial advices from high quarters.

Rep. Emannuel Celler (D., of N. Y.), after a conference with President Truman, told the House:

"The Case Bill received a veto, and justifiably so. I assure you that this bill will likewise earn a veto, despite any modifications which may be made by the Senate. I'm not a crystal gazer and I can't read tea leaves, but I do know the President will not accept this bill."

In a similar vein, Senator Irving Ives (R. of N.Y.) told the American Society of Newspaper Editors:

"There is no point in sending a bill to the President which has features to which he seriously objects."

Members of the AFL Executive Council, gathering for their regular quarterly Spring meeting, made it clear that they regard the present legislative situation as one of the major crises in organized labor's history.

The Hartley Bill, adopted by the House by an almost 3-to-1 vote, presents a direct threat of the destruction of major gains built up by national unions after long years of struggle and, if it becomes law, may put many unions out of business altogether.

Faced with this menace, it was expected that the Executive Council would make another effort to arrange conferences with the CIO for the merger of the two organizations into a solid and united labor movement. AFL leaders believe it is the part of statesmanship to unify the ranks of labor for the strongest possible resistance against the anti-union drive.

The Executive Council also will consider warnings of the possibility of an economic recession this Fall due to continuously rising prices and the failure of business to raise wages in line with higher living costs.

The Council is expected to give strong support to President Truman's demand for a gradual reduction of prices all along the line by American business and for wage increases to make up for losses in purchasing power.

But the main attention of the Council will be concentrated on the immediate legislative crisis. AFL Legislative representatives have virtually given up hope of persuading the House of Representatives to reconsider its drastic verdict on anti-labor legislation, but the situation in the Senate presents a more promising picture.

The measure approved by the Senate Labor Committee is far less drastic than the Hartley Bill adopted by the House but it is still a completely unpalatable dose for organized labor to swallow. Moreover, Republican leaders have openly threatened to toughen the committee bill when it gets to the floor of the Senate with amendments which would bring it closer in line with the Hartley Bill.

Even though the Senate should adopt a relatively moderate bill, the differing measures would go to conference between the House and the Senate and in view of the present temper of the House there is little likelihood that the "hate-labor" brigade would yield.

Under these circumstances, one of the factors to be considered is whether it would not be better strategy to let Congress go ahead and pass the worst possible bill, thereby increasing the chances of a Presidential veto.

Should the President veto the measure as finally adopted, there is little doubt that anti-labor forces in the House could muster the required two-thirds majority to override the veto. But an entirely different situation exists in the Senate where party lines are more closely drawn. Republican leaders doubt whether the Senate would override a Presidential veto and some of them have privately indicated that they would just as soon have the veto stand and have no new labor legislation. This, they believe, would give them political capital in the 1948 campaign. On the other hand, Democratic leaders believe the Republicans have killed their political goose in 1948 by officially sponsoring anti-labor legislation.